

in the future, as in the past, stand for the rights of all men. The democratic party may well hope to gain control of the federal government.

F. R. Day, Seattle, Wash.—The "mystery" is summed up in five words: Prejudice, ignorance (misunderstanding perhaps is a better word), fear, Romanism, indifference.

George M. Chase, Waterbury, Neb.—Republicans won by making the independent voter believe that hard times would follow a democratic victory. For the future reformers must work together. There surely is great hope for the democratic party. See the way the republican majority has been cut down in many of their strong states.

John A. Currie, Marysville, Mich.—I will say that the democrats made big losses in this county; these were due to labor unions and temperance movement. All business men and men who wish to build homes are robbed by union carpenters and union masons. All corporations are against men who will uphold unions. A labor union is a trust just as much as a sugar trust, for it compels us to pay a poor workman the same wages as the best workman. In hard times the laborers can be bought or coerced with a promise of work or a threat of no work, to vote against the man who tries to aid them. The reformer in the future should let labor unions work out their own ends. The republicans have done nothing to aid labor unions and have succeeded admirably. The democratic party can not hope to gain control of the federal government as long as they uphold labor unions.

Z. T. Pointer, Oskaloosa, Ia.—The threat that the election of Bryan meant disaster did the business. The democratic party must educate the people. But I think we can hardly expect to ever gain control of the federal government.

David Goodell, Sheboygan Falls, Wis.—This is the explanation: \$Church, \$state, \$politics. \$1896, \$1900, \$1908. This will continue as long as God smiles on this country with big crops, that sell big in the Liverpool market, giving us a big balance to develop our undeveloped resources. Horse sense, logic, argument to the winds! Boiled down it is the \$.

P. A. McClernan, Stephen, Minn.—My reason for the recent defeat of the democratic party is that all parties read and were influenced by the republican press; that the republican press was owned and directed by those who were specially interested in the defeat of the democratic party. My remedy for the present newspaper evil is to pass laws which will compel all daily newspapers to publish quarterly, yearly, or other, statements in their papers, showing the present ownership and all transfers of stock.

J. L. King, Elco, Ill.—Reformers must all enlist under the same banner and under the same leader and then they will win. If this enlistment is under the democratic banner it will gain control of the federal government.

Berton C. Howard, Morlow, N. H.—Progressive democrats should form a national fighting organization similar in methods to that of the socialist and the independence league. It seems that a change of 70,000 votes in the right states would have elected Mr. Bryan. It is not at all a hopeless task to get these 70,000.

Dr. P. L. Scanlan, Prairie du Chien, Wis.—The need of literature, especially newspapers, of the democratic principles are badly needed here. One man who was bitterly opposed to Mr. Bryan, became an ardent advocate of his election after taking *The Commoner* for a short time. The republicans put up no arguments. They used all their efforts to discredit the honesty and judgment and ability of Bryan. They flung the "bloody shirt," they preached prosperity, threatened disaster in case of Bryan's election, and made every appeal to prejudice that you can imagine and followed up with money. I fear the lack of confidence in Bryan was the main cause of his defeat; however, if he had made as many gains in other counties as in ours he would have been elected, while if he will note the heavy losses he sustained in our little city, he can easily see the cause of his defeat. I look upon the present conditions in this county as favorable to success in the democratic party in the near future. I can see how new alignments are to be made. The old conservative element in the democratic party must go into the republican and the progressives of all parties come to us. The west and the south must unite against the east to check the rule of corporate greed. It must come by just and honest laws, properly executed and to bring about these laws and see to their execution, is the work of the future democratic party. It may be possible to compel the adoption of these laws as a minority party, if we can, well and good; but if return to power is needed, some

day a majority of the voters will stand for the principles we advocated and must advance in order to be worthy of the people's support.

W. E. Vincent, Hutchinson, Kan.—The people shied at the name "democratic" and feared the result of the democratic administration. That's a fine article from the Omaha World-Herald, "The Battle That is Ahead," copied in this week's *Commoner*. But it is largely sentiment. I do not undertake to dispute that "God is still standing within the shadow, keeping watch above His own." But the work of a few favored predatory individuals with their millions of wealth, is an almighty sight more discernible to me. Not sentiment, but business wins in politics. Not religion, but business. We often heard it said that the church vote would elect Bryan. It would too if he had gotten it, but the republican churchman on election day let his idea of business mark his ballot. Also, it is either hatred or ignorance that charges Bryan's defeat to his weakness. The facts are the reform forces are so evenly divided between the two great parties, each refusing to "budge an inch" in favor of the other, that that party wins to which predatory wealth throws its enormous influence. "What course shall reformers adopt for the future?" If these two reform forces, marching under different banners really opposing each other, ought to be united, it seems to me the first question is, how unite? Reform republicans have shown in this campaign they will not come to us. Is it not good business, reason and charity for us to go to them? I believe that no condition more alarming to the Wall Street crowd and more pleasing and beneficial to the great rank and file could be brought about than the union of these elements of the two great parties. Let the democratic party dissolve and this condition will quickly be brought about. The republican reform forces need us for the great battle before them. To do this, no democrat need surrender his democratic principles.

Frank W. Ball, Grand Rapids, Mich.—Talking with the editor of one of the two weekly democratic papers here, he said: "The business men were against us, and we never can win so long as they are united on the other side." This statement is almost literally true, and includes a large majority of the manufacturers, Mr. Charles R. Sligh and Mr. George P. Hummer being notable exceptions. There are, in my judgment, two reasons for this. First, the tariff. A leading hardware merchant said to me when the McKinley tariff bill was passed: "The new law has put \$25,000 clean cash into our pockets, through increase in the price of stock on hand. Is there any reason why we should object?" The repeal of that law would cause a corresponding loss in value of stock on hand, and members of that hardware firm, old time democrats, vote the republican ticket through fear of the loss to them which would follow tariff reform. Millinery, dry goods, shoes, drugs, almost all stores carry some line of goods in stock that would drop in price in case of tariff reductions, and if there would be any benefit to make good the immediate loss the average storekeeper fails to see it. Second, The banks and their dislike of the bank deposit guarantee plan and their fear that a change in the administration would leave the banks a less favored special privilege class than they have been. The reach of the banks among the business men and manufacturers is most powerful, because they are borrowers, rather than depositors. The banks have loaned to their customers, mostly of these two classes, more than four times the total amount of currency in the country, and most of the successful business men and manufacturers are today heavier borrowers than ever before. Many of them are literally at the mercy of the bankers. The people, too, are more in debt than ever before. The amount of house furnishings, apparel of every kind bought on the "dollar a week" or some similar time payment plan has increased prodigiously within the last twelve years, and because of this debt load many laborers were more afraid of being laid off, in case of a democratic victory, than they were in 1896, when they had nothing, to be sure, but owed nothing. If the presidential election were the whole thing. I believe you would have been elected, but many voted the other ticket fearing that you could accomplish nothing with a congress whose majority leaders would do all in their power to make your administration a failure, and this would mean two or three years of uncertainty and this would mean business depression. I told the editor above mentioned that times would be worse instead of better next year and after, and the working men and farmers would then know

they had been bilked in the prosperity promises made and would be snowed under at the next election. The republicans have had and now have no program to improve business conditions. The bankers, who were the largest contributors to their campaign, will not permit any effective remedy. Getting interest—and rates of interest are much higher than they were eight and twelve years ago—on four times the total amount of currency in the country is too soft a snap to let go of willingly. What the country most needs, it seems to me, is not a five to ten per cent emergency currency law, which places it in the power of the banks to put the screws harder on their customers, and gives the latter no show for relief, but a billion or more of additional currency, and a postal savings system, the savings funds not to be loaned to banks, but to anyone having satisfactory collateral, at three per cent interest. In a contest along these lines, as I have previously written you, I believe there will be victory for the democrats.

George H. Leonhart, Warren, Pa.—Tariff reduction means death to any party. In New York City I know from personal knowledge that the head of every factory called his men together and told them that they had orders contingent on Taft's election. I am not a believer in high tariff and shall always vote against it, but as long as you have the reduction of tariff in your platform corporations will fight you and laboring men dare not vote any other way.

Henry Heaton, Belfield, N. D.—Fear of hard times prevented a democratic landslide in the western states. Let democrats reform their state government. Follow the lead of Oregon and Oklahoma. If the democratic party as such ever hopes to win it must conduct a campaign of education as to the causes of the succession of periods of falling and rising prices that have succeeded each other since the world began. The real causes of these periods must be made so plain that no demagogue who has any regard for his reputation for intelligence will have the temerity to stand before an intelligent audience and repeat the well known misstatements that free trade has always caused hard times and that the panic of '93 was caused by it. Every student of economic science knows these statements to be false, yet they have been boldly repeated by republican speakers and writers, from the president-elect down, for the past fifteen years.

E. B. Swift, Kokomo, Ind.—The democratic party is on the right road, and if it will organize the young men and continue to preach the true democratic principles to the masses it can by quiet and earnest effort, bring about a feeling of independence and determination in the hearts of the American people which can not be thwarted by the "scare crow" methods of the republican calamity howler. Right must and shall prevail; consequently the democratic party may hope to gain control of the federal government and administer its affairs, not in the interest of the classes, but in the interest of all the people.

Dr. George M. McWhorter, Riverton, Ala.—Intimidation and bribery practiced by certain individuals at the head of great corporations. Such methods are identical with the methods of the night riders in the tobacco districts. Democrats should endeavor to arouse the people to a sense of the danger that threatens them at the hands of these respectable terrorists. The democratic party can, by rising to the emergency and appealing to the higher and better instincts of the American people, hope to gain control of the federal government.

D. B. Stewart, Anchor, Ill.—The banks of the United States generally withdrew from circulation all moneys of the nation in the fall of 1907, thereby throwing out of employment millions of the laboring classes, and rendering their families destitute of food, clothing and the comforts of life, and they were promised work if Taft was elected and continued suffering if Bryan was elected. A drowning man will grasp a straw.

COMBINED!

Anxious Reader: Yes, Mr. Bryan was defeated. It is not known just how many votes Mr. Taft received as a representative of eastern conservatism and how many he received as the representative of Mr. Roosevelt's radicalism. If these two votes were equally divided, Mr. Bryan had about two million more votes than either, but Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt combined had about a million and a quarter more than Mr. Bryan.